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Viewing cable 06MANAGUA2442, OAS EOM EXPECTS VOTE TRANSMISSION PROBLEMS ON

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06MANAGUA2442**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MANAGUA2442	2006-11-02 20:18	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758464.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4103/la-embusa-y-el-gabinete-de-ortega>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4104/d-escoto-en-onu-un-desafio-de-ortega-a-ee-uu-rdquo>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4102/estrada-y-la-lquo-doble-cara-rdquo-ante-ee-uu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-lquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4041/millones-de-dolares-sin-control-y-a-disolucion>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4040/la-lquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-venezuela-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4047/rodrigo-barreto-enviado-de-lquo-vacaciones-rdquo>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-lquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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P 022018Z NOV 06
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8109
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 002442

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/USOAS, WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/02/2016

TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR KDEM NU

SUBJECT: OAS EOM EXPECTS VOTE TRANSMISSION PROBLEMS ON
ELECTION DAY

REF: A. MANAGUA 02074

- 1B. MANAGUA 1593
- 1C. MANAGUA 1555
- 1D. MANAGUA 0565
- 1E. 2005 MANAGUA 2806

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: The OAS issued a communique factoring in the Ambassador's recent observations to OAS Election Observation Mission (EOM) chief Gustavo Fernandez. The OAS EOM is coordinating closely with other observation groups and will meet with the White House delegation. Fernandez believes that potential problem areas include vote transmission delays/failures; systematic contesting of the vote results; early declaration of victory by one candidate; and, marked differences between quick count and CSE results. While he is confident that the OAS will detect any major manipulations of the vote count, he admits that changes affecting the results of the National Assembly seats will be harder to detect. He also believes that, regardless of election outcome, democracy here will advance to some degree; however, Nicaragua's constitutional changes will seriously limit Eduardo Montealegre's ability to govern if he wins the election. The Sandinista Front (FSLN)-dominated CSE could exploit data transmission interruptions to enable the early results to favor FSLN candidate Daniel Ortega, who in turn could use these results as justification to declare early victory. END SUMMARY.

OAS ISSUES COMMUNIQUE, WILL RELEASE FOUR PRESS RELEASES

12. (C) As OAS EOM Chief Gustavo Fernandez had assured Ambassador on 01 November, the OAS issued a communique through dailies La Prensa and El Nuevo Diario on 02 November. The communique factors in the Ambassador's observations to Fernandez regarding the need for the CSE to facilitate cedula and temporary voter card documents, to dissuade political parties from engaging in disinformation campaigns (specifically the PLC's claims that Montealegre has withdrawn his candidacy), and to urge all political parties to refrain from declaring early victory. Highlights of the communique follow:

--the CSE, political parties, media, and institutions should ensure the maximum participation possible on November 5 by doubling their efforts to urge Nicaraguans to pick up their cedulas and temporary voting documents before election day;

--the CSE must guarantee that any remaining cedulas/temporary

voting cards in its possession are properly secured; the OAS will accompany the CSE in the process;

--Nicaraguans should be prudent and wait for the CSE's official vote results;

--Nicaraguans should avoid rumors and pronouncements of actions that could affect the normal development of the electoral process;

--political actors should reduce their level of verbal confrontation.

--the media has a special role in helping fortify democracy and peace in Nicaragua by disseminating accurate and comprehensive information

--the EOM is convinced that Nicaragua's democratic system will be consolidated with massive civic participation, responsible political leadership, electoral authorities' strict adherence to the norms, and civil society's transparent and independent observation.

¶13. (SBU) According to Fernandez, the OAS EOM will issue four press releases on November 5-6. The first release will be issued at 12 noon on Sunday and will cover the overall situation at the JRVs, logistics, and security matters. The second will be issued at 5 PM and will cover voter turnout. The third will be issued at 10 PM and will include observation of the process and the closure process. The fourth release, to be issued around 10 AM on Monday, will cover data transmission and impugnaciones.

OBSERVER COORDINATION ON TRACK, SOME CONCERNNS REMAIN

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¶14. (C) Fernandez noted that the OAS is coordinating information sharing with the EU EOM, Carter Center, the Donor's Group, and others supporting the observation process. Responding to the Ambassador's news that a small White House delegation will be present for the elections, Fernandez said he would be pleased to meet with them. He then shared what he considers could be "minor, isolated incidents and major problems":

Minor incidents:

--lack of and/or theft of voting materials in some voting tables (JRVs);

--some cases of "raton loco" (redirecting voters to other JRVs because they do not appear on the JRV list);

--last-minute changes in JRV locations; and,

--protests over non-delivery of cedulas (he noted most cedula delivery problems have occurred in Boaco, Leon/Chinandega, and Matagalpa/Jinotega areas).

Major problems:

--probable failures in vote data transmissions (the CSE has admitted that its preliminary tests thus far have been flawed due both to incompatible equipment and poorly trained personnel who are not properly handling fax and scanning equipment);

--waves of systematic vote result challenges (impugnaciones) by losing parties at particular JRVs; and,

--early declaration of victory by one candidate followed by denunciations of fraud; and,

--marked differences between quick count and CSE results.

¶15. (C) Fernandez remarked that if the OAS detects serious irregularities during any stage of the electoral process, it will issue a statement to the effect that it is "analyzing

the situation to determine whether or not the election is legitimate."

VOTE FRAUD - MANIPULATIONS MORE LIKELY FOR ASSEMBLY SEATS

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¶6. (C) Regarding allegations we are hearing that the CSE will manipulate vote results at its central computation center (see October 30 and November 1 updates), Fernandez noted that the observers and the quick count would uncover major manipulations. However, he admitted that minor changes affecting the results of the National Assembly seats would be harder to detect.

NICA DEMOCRACY WILL PROGRESS REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME, BUT IF MONTEALEGRE WINS, HE WILL FACE A BATTLE FROM THE START

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¶7. (C) In Fernandez's view, regardless of outcome of Nicaragua's November 5 elections, its democracy will advance to some degree, as the new National Assembly will include members of Nicaragua's emerging parties. However, he warned that the implementation of Nicaragua's constitutional changes eroding the power of the executive (effective January 20, 2007) will seriously limit Eduardo Montealegre's ability to govern if he wins the election.

COMMENT

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¶8. (C) The FSLN-dominated CSE could exploit the expectations that data transmission interruptions and delays will occur to allow early results to enter from areas favoring FSLN candidate Daniel Ortega, who in turn could use these results as justification to declare early victory. And, at polling tables where Ortega and/or Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC) candidate Jose Rizo are weak, contesting these results (impugnaciones) could eliminate votes that favor competitors Eduardo Montealegre and Edmundo Jarquin of the Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN) and the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS), respectively. While the FSLN appears to possess the muscle to assert victory (on 01 November, FSLN militants virtually paralyzed Managua for hours as they took control of all of the city's major traffic circles and choke points),

the National Police Commissioner Aminta Granera tells us that the police only have enough tear gas and rubber bullets to deal with election-related violence for two days.

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